

Programme Evaluation Study of a Diploma Programme in Nutrition and Health Education: A Case Study from the National Open University of India

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: To do programme evaluation of a programme of study in nutrition and health education.

Design/ Methodology/Approach: Programme evaluation in open and distance education is an integral concept. Programme evaluation is a task which is generally taken up to review a programme of study. Nutrition and health is an important sector in the development of nation's well-being and longevity. The Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education (DNHE) is a novel, successfully running programme of the School of Continuing Education, IGNOU. It provides for continuous professional enrichment of grass root workers and other individuals interested in the area of health and nutrition education. There was a felt need to conduct an evaluation study of Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education programme, so as to analyze the relevance of the curriculum and study the effectiveness of the course material which would lead to the revision of the programme. Secondary data was collected from analysis of SLMs and relevant documents of this programme. Primary data was collected from DNHE learners, academic counsellors and study center coordinators through questionnaire and in-depth interviews.

Findings: The programme evaluation revealed that the programme was useful to all the stakeholders. The self-learning material (SLMs) of DNHE were very well received and appreciated. It was felt that such courses are important for continuing education and skill development of all stakeholders working in the area of health and nutrition education. Revision of course materials is important so as to keep the course content updated. Suggestions to further improve the programme and promote effective delivery and implementation of the programme have been given in the paper. With implementation of the recommendations of the study, the programme content, delivery and other implementation aspects will be further improved.

Originality/Value: This paper is based on research carried out to conduct programme evaluation study for a Diploma programme in Nutrition and Health Education of an open university with international presence. The paper demonstrates the appreciation of self-learning materials by the stake holders, and makes recommendations for further improvement of programme content and its delivery.

Paper Type: Empirical Research Paper

KEYWORDS Programme evaluation | Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education | Learners

Academic Counsellors | Skill Development | Study Centers

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Introduction

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), established by an Act of the Indian Parliament on September 20, 1985 with its objectives being democratizing of higher education by taking it to the doorsteps of the learners (IGNOU, 2020). Indira Gandhi National Open University offers many programmes of study through various Schools (IGNOU, 2020). As per the IGNOU Handbook on Programme Evaluation (2006), a programme is a set of activities designed to produce certain desired effects or outcomes to meet some set standard or norm, a recognized social need or to solve an identified social problem. Studies have been conducted for various purposes to assess the efficiency of programmes. Programme evaluation in open and distance education is an integral concept. Programme evaluation has been defined by Caffarella (2002) as “a process used to determine whether the design and delivery of a program were effective and whether the proposed outcomes were met”.

Mary Thorpe (1933a) had laid stress on quality of distance education programmes and demonstrable quality assurance systems being widespread and there is a prevalent concern now on emphases on the need for evaluation. Writings in distance education has generated a considerable literature for evaluation of academic programmes, helped develop models relevant for evaluation of distance education programmes, and it has been noted that the need for programme evaluation in distance education has been recognized and initiated by educators and evaluators of distance education (Freeman, 1991; Woodley and Kirkwood, 1987; Thorpe, 1993b; Thorpe, 1996; Calder, 1994). Programme evaluation is regarded as the process that leads to judgment about the worth, effectiveness and efficiency of an educational programme (Pradhan, 2006). Panda (1991) noted that programme evaluation is of a specific programme, where in it is an ongoing process and evaluation will lead to some long-term decisions for that specific programme. Patnaik (2002) further reiterated that programme evaluation to be a systematic process of gathering and providing information about the worth of an educational programme which would assist in decision making. Knox (2002) suggested that evaluation is based upon on the eight indicators of program quality; which are: educational gains, program planning, curriculum and instruction, staffing and staff development, support services, recruitment, retention, and program coordination and institutional support. According to Woodley (1995), programme evaluation is expected to be used by open distance learning system to improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching learning. According to Knox (2002) the stake holders for programme evaluation are course developers, administrators, collaborators. Programme evaluation is used to assess the relevance, performance, and utility of ongoing as well as completed programmes.

The programme evaluation is a task which is generally taken up to review the programme of study. School of Continuing Education (SOCE), IGNOU is running various

professional job oriented programmes of study of which, DNHE is one of the important niche programmes being offered. As outlined on the IGNOU website (2020), the Diploma programme in Nutrition and Health Education (DNHE) is a holistic package providing opportunities to learners to gain knowledge about nutrition, public health, develop skills in communicating nutrition and health-related information to the community and function as effective nutrition and health educators (IGNOU, 2020).

DNHE has been on offer from School of Continuing Education (SOCE) since 1999. There was a felt need to conduct programme evaluation study of Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education.

Literature Review

The focus of this paper is on the programme evaluation research. Research on programme evaluation and quality assurance of open and distance education needs to be a mandatory part of programme development and revision. But, at the same time it must be accepted that such tasks are not much carried out in India, though, some prominent research work has come up in this area of programme evaluation.

Klenowski (2010) explained that the concept of curriculum evaluation is integral to curriculum evaluation and may be defined as what to taught, to whom, when, where, how and why. The term curriculum refers to teaching and learning, which may at times also include emphasis on content, standards or objectives, teaching methods and pedagogical strategies used. The term evaluation refers to the processes of description, analysis, judgement of educational programs, practices, institutions and policies for various purposes. Thus, evaluation of curriculum involves determining the value or worth of particular products or processes that includes learning objectives, documents or experiences for the purposes of informing decision making about the curriculum. Need for programme evaluation is to maintain, develop or modify a particular curriculum programme. Herein, summative evaluation is done so as to assess the outcome, merit and worth of a particular curriculum. Case study, interview method, observation method, portrayal, vignettes, narrative accounts to be used for data collection.

Fletcher (2010) said that cost analysis of a programme of study can also be called cost-benefit analysis, efficiency assessment, return on investment, or cost-utility analysis. Allen Woodley (1995) suggested that the course writers of a program should work towards perfection to make efficient material for the learners which would have implications to course design of the programme. Neale & Bell (2008) said that the role of external or internal evaluator for programme evaluation and its impact on the stake-holders interest in programme evaluation needs to be ascertained.



Mishra, Vijashri and Garg (2009) did programme evaluation study of the undergraduate physics programme at IGNOU. They adapted the major tenants of the CIPP model. The findings employed for the study was analyzing records, document, and database analysis, surveys, and case studies. The results of this study showed that there was a need to make student support system more effective for learners, study material to be learner friendly by simplifying the mathematical details and improving the presentation of the course material (Mishra, Vijashri and Garg, 2009).

Gaba and Dash (2004) did a course evaluation study in open and distance learning for course on “Instruction in higher education” from Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education programme of IGNOU. They used structured questionnaire method. Gaba and Dash (2004) found in their study that majority of students were satisfied with self-instructional materials, assignments, the extended contact programme, and delivery mechanisms but some of the respondents were dissatisfied with academic counseling and use of audio-video programmes. Priyadarshini & Ratra (2014a) conducted programme evaluation of Post Graduate Certificate in Endodontics for all the components of programme evaluation and further gave a detailed report on the perceived importance of accreditation by the students. Priyadarshini & Ratra (2014b) in another programme evaluation study conducted on Post Graduate Certificate in Oral Implantology programme, found that learners gave importance to the accreditation of the programme and, learners also appreciated the self-learning material of the programme. Panda, et al (1998) conducted a study on 22 partner institutions of IGNOU to obtain feedback on student support services. Priyadarshini (2017) pointed out in the programme evaluation study of the DVAPFV programme of IGNOU that a modular programme “with easy accessibility to the programme study centres and stronger linkages with industry would strengthen the development of human resources”. Fozdar (2010) in his evaluation study of B.Sc. programme of IGNOU concluded that IGNOU had succeeded in providing in access to higher quality science education to a diverse learner population across the country. Kapur, D. (2010) conducted the evaluation study of M.Sc. in Dietetics and Food Service Management to assess course content of this programme and revised the programme after obtaining the feedback, and learners reported the self-learning materials provided were easy to understand. Kapoor, B. (2004) developed a model for programme evaluation that can be used for evaluating distance education programmes and used this model for evaluating the nursing programme of IGNOU.

The PREST B4 Handbook (2009) points out that programme evaluation is of four types; i) evaluation of need which focuses on evaluating the needs of an identified target group, ii) evaluation of outcome which aims at assessing the

effects of the programme, iii) evaluation of process i.e. the evaluation would focus on the design and implementation of a programme, and iv) evaluation of efficiency wherein the emphasis is on whether the programme has achieved its outcomes in the most efficient and cost effective manner. The present evaluation study for DNHE was proposed to be a study wherein evaluation of processes along with evaluation of outcomes was planned.

Objectives

The following were the specific objectives of this study:

- to analyse the relevance and the curriculum design and development of Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education (DNHE);
- to study the profile of the distance learners enrolled in the DNHE programme;
- to find out the effectiveness of self-learning material (SLMs) of DNHE programme;
- to find out effectiveness of learner support services; and
- to suggest recommendations for revision of the programme.

Research Methodology

The present study used mixed methods. Qualitative data analysis was done in the use of document analysis (content analysis). For the present study, quantitative data was collected through a descriptive sample survey. The qualitative data analysis was based on analysis of documents related to DNHE programme, SLMs (Self-Learning Materials), the available data and records of DNHE learners. The primary research data was collected through questionnaire-based survey through post and online, in-depth interviews were conducted in the field. The data collection was done by the researchers.

Sample:

Learners: A total of 900 students of both admission cycle sessions (January and July batch) up to year 2013, based on the student registration database available with the Student Registration Division (SRD), were sent questionnaire to take part in the study. However, a total of 167 questionnaires were received back from DNHE learners out of which 163 questionnaires were complete in all respects.

Academic Counsellors: According to database available with the Regional Services Division (RSD) a total of 303 Academic Counsellors were involved for DNHE programme till year 2013, however, reply was received from 55 Academic Counsellors.

Study Center Coordinators: According to database available with the Regional Services Division (RSD), a total of 278 study center coordinators were involved for DNHE programme till year 2013, however, reply was received from a total of 46 study centre coordinators of which 43 were complete filled in forms. Two study centers informed that they were no more offering this programme and one study centre reported that it is a new study centre for this programme and thus had not filled in the questionnaire. Both study centre coordinator and assistant study centre coordinators were included in this study.

For in-depth data collection from learners of DNHE, the students belonging to one each Study Centre in the three Delhi Regional Centres: Delhi Regional Centre-1, Delhi Regional Centre-2, and Delhi Regional Centre-3, where the programme was running and were willing to participate in the study were contacted for data collection. Incidental random sample was used to collect data from the DNHE learners, DNHE academic counsellors, and, DNHE study center coordinators present at the selected DNHE study centres. In-depth interviews as “a form of conversation” Burges (1984) and Lofland and Lofland (1995) were used to explore further.

Tools for data collection

Questionnaire for the Learners: Questionnaire for the learners was formulated for seeking information related to why the learners had sought admission in this programme, their feedback regarding course material, counselling, assignments, support services, etc. Overall, questionnaire contained 9 sections and a total of 60 items. It took approximately 20-25 minutes to fill in the responses.

Questionnaire for the Academic Counsellors: Questionnaire for the Academic Counsellors was prepared for seeking information related to the delivery and implementation, and content of the course material. Overall, it contained 28 items. It took approximately 15 minutes to fill in the responses.

Questionnaire for the Study Centre Coordinators: Questionnaire for the Study Centre Coordinators was prepared for seeking information related to the delivery and implementation. Overall, it contained 23 items. It took approximately 10 minutes to fill in the responses.

Interview Schedule for IGNOU Officials: Interview schedule for IGNOU officials at various student support services related Divisions like Regional Services Division (RSD), Student Registration Division (SRD), Material Production and Distribution Division (MPDD), etc. was made. Interview schedule contained about 5-7 questions specific to the Division concerned. Face to face interviews were conducted and it took about 10-30 minutes to seek the information.

Content analysis of programme documents: Content analysis of the Programme Guide was done. In this the laid down objectives and rationale for the programme of study was studied. Content analysis of the self-learning materials for the programme was done keeping in view the philosophy followed at IGNOU with regard to preparation of printed self-learning instructional materials. The material was analysed keeping the ODL instructional pedagogy in view and also from gender sensitivity perspective.

Content analysis of Admission Data: The admission data available with Student Registration Division (SRD) was examined. The analysis of learner profile was based upon this data.

Content analysis of data from Regional Services Division: The data pertaining to the Regional Centers and Study Centers offering DNHE programme and list of Academic Counsellors attached with this programme had been taken from the Regional Services Division (RSD).

Limitations

The limitations of this study were that many learners did not return the filled-in questionnaires. Some of the questionnaires returned back as addresses were incorrect or not updated in the institutional records. Given the time constraint and limited budgetary resources available, only a limited number of stake holders – learners, academic counsellors, study centre coordinators were involved for data collection through postal services. The fieldwork for this study was restricted to the three Regional Centers of Delhi, National Capital Region (NCR) due to budgetary constraints.

Results and Discussion

1. To analyse the curriculum design and development of Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education (DNHE)

Document Analysis

Document analysis is a research method in which documents are interpreted to better understand a particular topic (Bowen, 2009). As a part of this analysis, the documents examined included the Programme Guide. As per the STRIDE (2006) Manual for Programme and Course Coordinators, the Programme guide “for distance learners, is the major means of information about the University’s policies and practices adopted for a specific programme of study”.

Programme Guide of Diploma Programme in Nutrition and Health Education contains programme objectives with specific contribution to the fulfillment of University’s objectives. Details of university’s objectives and vision have been outlined in the Programme Guide. The eligibility



criteria of for admission to DNHE and the aims of the programme have been outlined in the programme guide. Further, the details of the four courses of the programme was included in the Programme Guide.

The detailed analysis of the Programme Guide for DNHE revealed the following:

- Objectives of the programme had been clearly stated.
- The information related to the students had been provided in simple and easy to understand language.
- The learner centric language had been used. The student had been addressed as “YOU” in the programme guide.
- The Programme Guide was gender neutral.
- The presentation of the course material content had been explained.
- Information regarding how to study was provided.
- Clarity about the student’s responsibilities during the programme study was provided.
- Information regarding allotment of study centre, readmission, early declaration of result, change of address etc. was explained in simple language.
- Detailed programme structure of all the four courses of DNHE programme was provided for student’s reference.
- Contact details of different IGNOU Regional Centres were provided in the annexures.
- Various sample forms had been given in the annexure at the end of the guide, like term end examination form, application form for readmission, etc. which would help the student.

On the whole, the programme guide, explained objectives, outlined the programme structure and content, explained both the theory and practical components of the study, the role of the Study Centres and arrangement of contact sessions had been told; evaluation of assignments, theory and practical courses was explained; and also indicated IGNOU personnel who needed to be contacted for various problems encountered while studying.

From the primary data obtained from learners, it was found from learners that audio and video programmes listed in the programme guide were not available for their reference. Field visit to the three Study Centers also showed that these audio and video programmes were not available. Many learners had reported use of Programme Guide.

2. To study the profile of the distance learners enrolled in the DNHE programme

Document analysis of Learner Profile from SRD Data

Based upon the database of DNHE learners, provided by Student Registration Division (SRD), the data related to sex and marital status of the learners is presented in Table 1. Data revealed that, about 55% of students enrolled were females. With regards to marital status, most of the learners who enrolled for DNHE were married. Further, it was noted that some learners had left these columns blank.

Table 1: Sex and marital status of the learners

| Sex Categorization | | | |
|--------------------|---------|--------|-------|
| Female | Male | Blank | Total |
| 16614 | 8371 | 5319 | 30304 |
| 54.82% | 27.62% | 17.55% | |
| Marital Status | | | |
| Single | Married | Blank | Total |
| 9339 | 19717 | 1248 | 30304 |
| 30.82% | 65.06% | 4.12% | |

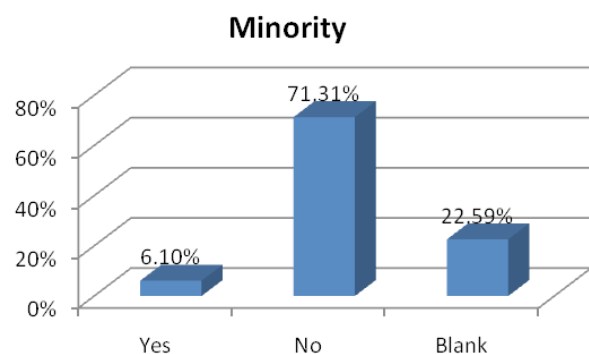


Figure 1: Minority admissions among learners

Data related to minority status is presented in Figure 1. It was observed that about 6% of students who took admission in DNHE belonged to minority group. With regard to employment status, Figure 2 shows that most of the learners enrolled for DNHE were unemployed.

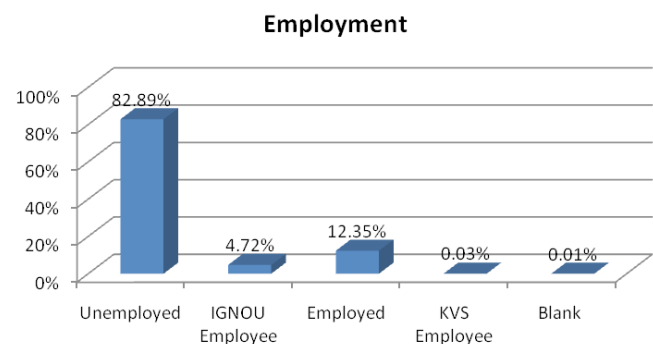


Figure 2: Employment status of DNHE learners

Feedback from Learners Regarding the Programme

Analysis of the data revealed that majority (62%) of respondents were females who sent their feedback as highlighted in Figure 3 which is in correspondent to the database of DNHE programme having higher female enrolment in DNHE programme. On review of the responses, it was observed that maximum number of students (66.9%) had opted for English medium for studying DNHE. Nearly half of the learners were unemployed (52.8%) and maximum number of students belonged to urban area (49.1%). Data related to religion of the learners (Figure 4) revealed that most of the learners (83.4%) belonged to Hindu religion. Also, it was observed that most of the learners belonged to 20-25 years of the age (33.7%).

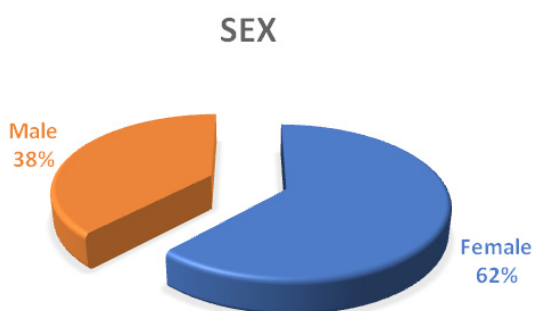


Figure 3: Sex of DNHE learners who provided feedback

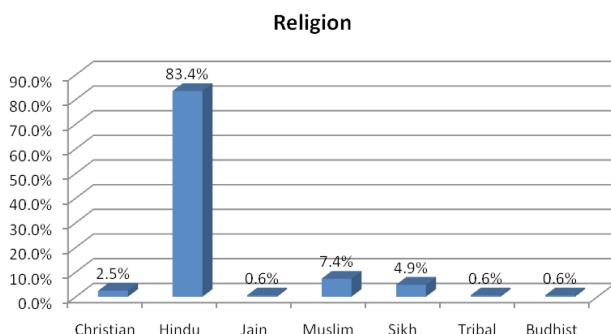


Figure 4: Religion of learners

Reasons for Joining DNHE programme

Most of the learners had joined DNHE to update knowledge in key areas of nutrition, and to enhance professional qualification and growth. Some of the learners had joined this programme out of curiosity, to develop entrepreneurship and start a food service unit and/or nutrition counseling unit, to get admission in Master of Science in Dietetics and Food Science Nutrition programme of IGNOU, to know about diet as was practicing yoga, to do community work, and to be a good advisor about nutrition, etc.

3. To find out the effectiveness of self-learning material, SLMs of DNHE programme

Document analysis of SLMs of DNHE programme

The DNHE programme consisted of 4 courses, each of 8 credits. There were three theory courses and fourth course as Project Work. Below is detailed discussion of these courses.

Course 1; DNHE-1: Nutrition for the Community (8 Credits), containing 7 Blocks (total 24 Units); and 1 Practical Manual.

Course 2: DNHE-2: Public Health and Hygiene (8 Credits), containing 7 Blocks (total 23 Units) and 1 Practical Manual.

Course 3: DNHE-3 Nutrition and Health Education (8 Credits), containing 7 Blocks (total 21 Units).

Course 4: DNHE- 4 Project Work-Nutrition and Health Education (8 credits), the details of what to do in the project work had been provided.

The content analysis of the self-learning materials of DNHE showed following:

- Language was simple and easy to understand.
- Student was addressed as “You” in the course material. Learner centric didactic language was used.
- Most of the places “She” was used to address the learner.
- Examples and activities used in the SLMs was gender and age specification as necessary in the content. The SLMs were legibly printed.
- All the Units in each Course contained use of assistive devices such as – Structure, Introduction, Objectives, Check Your Progress Exercise, Let Us Sum Up, Glossary, and Answers to Check Your Progress Exercise.
- Objectives were well defined in each Unit. Introduction was written keeping learner’s perspective, and was motivating for the learner to keep self-motivated to read the SLMs. Self-instructional design was learner centered as the print material seemed to be communicating in first person. SLMs were found to be gender sensitive.
- Units were designed with the help of artwork/relevant diagrams to explain various concepts wherever required as discussed.
- Unit end exercises, references, and further readings for student’s reference were not provided in the units.
- Project work guideline booklet described the process and what to do as part of project work. Modalities of report writing and statistical methods were explained.



To conclude, the interaction in the field revealed that the course materials for DNHE were praised for being well written, lucid and understandable. The SOCE and Programme Coordinator’s work was applauded for launching a highly relevant social need programme and course material was appreciated. Field functionaries felt that other than the issue of needing updating, materials were of high quality. There was a felt need from both the learners as well as academic counsellors to simplify the project work.

Learners Feedback regarding Course Material

Data regarding clarity of concepts, language used in self-learning material is presented in Figure 5. Data revealed that majority of the learners (55.8%), found the course contents were easy to understand and the language used in self-learning material was simple and clear, especially the English medium course materials. Majority (65% approximately) expressed that the format used in the SLMs was easy to understand and the SLMs was legible. Concepts were clearly clarified in SLMs. Regarding check your progress exercises, It was seen that 71% of the learners worked upon check your progress exercises and found it useful. Most of the learners also found SLMs to be helpful in writing assignments.

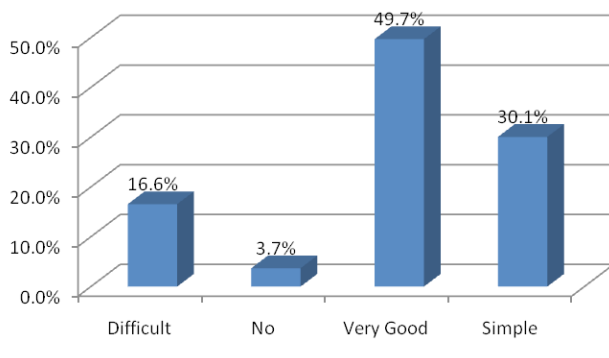


Figure 5: Clarity of Concepts in SLMs

With regards to Practical Manual, majority (56%) of the learners found Practical Manuals of DNHE very informative and engaging. Learners feedback regarding DNHE programme guide revealed that three-fourth of the learners found DNHE Programme Guide useful, as highlighted in Table 3. Also, most of the learners (88%) had read the Programme Guide before starting their studies.

Table 3: Feedback regarding DNHE Programme Guide

| Programme Guide Useful | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| Yes | No | Total |
| 123 | 40 | 163 |
| 75.5% | 24.5% | |
| Read the Guide before starting reading the study material | | |
| Yes | No | Total |
| 144 | 19 | 163 |
| 88.3% | 11.7% | |

4. To find out effectiveness of learner support services

Document analysis of Academic Counsellors data from RSD

The data received from Regional Services Division (RSD) showed that there were total of 303 numbers of Academic Counsellors involved for DNHE programme till year 2013. The total numbers of Learner Support Centres (LSCs) activated for DNHE Programme were 278 and a total number of 64 Regional Centres were involved till year 2013.

Learners Feedback regarding Academic Counselling

Data related to learners’ feedback regarding academic counselling is presented in Figure 6. The data collated from learners showed that large number of learners (72%) went to attend the theory counselling sessions at the study centre. Further, 89% of learners reported that the academic sessions at the study centre were well organized. 90% of the learners found the academic sessions were useful and helped to clarify the concepts. While 81% students reported that the academic counselling sessions were interactive and these sessions helped them in understanding the concepts.

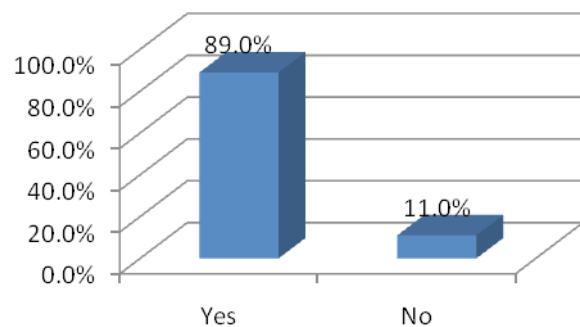


Figure 6: Academic Sessions were organized

Data related to assignment submission showed that more than 50% students had submitted their assignments. Also, 48.9% students reported to have received tutor comments on their checked assignments.

Learners Feedback Regarding Support Services

The response regarding support services is presented in Figure 7. More than half of the students reported that they had received course material on time. While, more than half of the learners (53%) noted that they had not attended Induction programme at the study center. Further, it was observed that 40% of the learners regularly visited the study center and majority of the learners were living more than 5 kms away from the study center. It was reported that many of them had also contacted the Regional Center in fact, many of them even had personally visited the concerned IGNOU Regional Center. Some of the learners had contacted the Programme Coordinator at the IGNOU headquarters.

With regards to information received by learners regarding examination procedure, Table 5 presents the data. More than half of the learners reported that the study center had explained examination procedure.

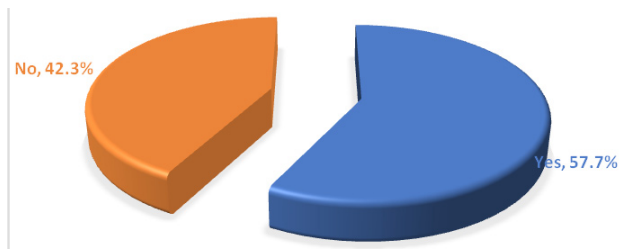


Figure 7: Learners received course material on time

Table 5: Examination procedure explained at study centre

| Yes | No | Total |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 91 | 72 | 163 |
| 55.8% | 44.2% | |

Learners Feedback Regarding Overall Programme

Figure 8 presents data related to students' satisfaction with DNHE programme structure. Large (76%) number of learners reported that DNHE programme helped in identifying new areas of knowledge/ learning. More than half of the learners expressed that they were satisfied with the programme structure of DNHE.

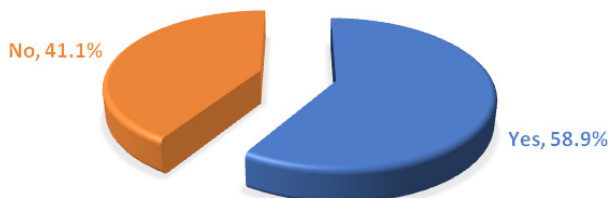


Figure 8: Satisfied with complete programme structure of DNHE programme

Feedback from Academic Counsellors

Personal Information of academic counsellors

From the total 55 DNHE academic counsellors had replied maximum in number were females (N=52). Almost all the academic counsellors had more than two years of teaching experience. It was found that 65% of Academic Counsellors had not attended any distance education orientation programme, see Figure 9.

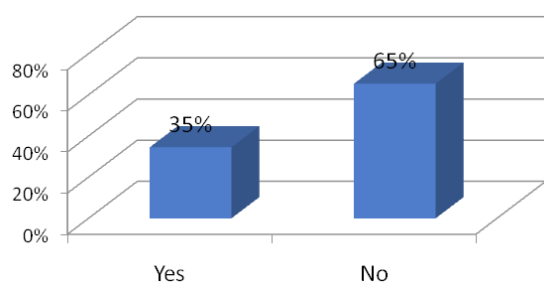


Figure 9: Academic counsellors attended distance education orientation programme

Support Services at Study Centre

It was reported by most of the academic counsellors (85%) that the support services provided at study center was adequate. Further, as observed from Figure 10, 89% of the academic counsellors reported that they had received payment for counselling sessions on time.

Receive the payment for counselling in time

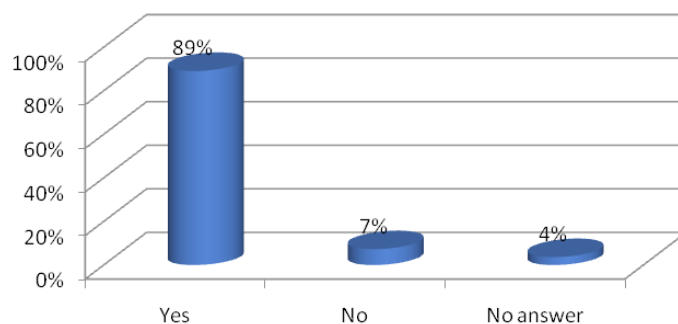


Figure 10: Receive the payment for counseling in time

Academic Counsellor's views on IGNOU's SLMs

More than half of the academic counsellors found curriculum, design and courses content of DNHE programme as excellent. Most of the academic counsellors found that language used in the DNHE course material was easy to understand and the instructional design was effective. Many of the academic counsellors (74%) found Project Manual, DNHE-4 easy to comprehend. 85% of the academic counsellors reported that they received the counselling schedule for DNHE course in advance from the study center. Further, most of the academic counsellors (73%) had received the DNHE course material in advance to the counselling sessions. With regards to the academic counsellors views regarding whether counselling session helped in avoiding the feeling of isolation among learners, it was found that maximum number of academic counsellors (84%) felt that these sessions were helpful in avoiding feeling of isolation among learners. It was observed that most of the academic counsellors (91%) felt that academic sessions should be compulsory for all courses particularly for professional programmes and even for general programmes of study. Maximum of the academic counsellors found DNHE programme guide comprehensive. 49% of academic counsellors spent about an hour on each assignment to mark with comments. Also 85% of academic counsellors felt that the tutor comments on the assignments did benefit the learners. Nearly, 65% of academic counsellors, said that DNHE Programme needs revision and updating.

Feedback from Study Center Coordinator

It was observed that many of the study centre coordinators (58%) had previous experience, but, many of the study centre



coordinator had not received any training or orientation from IGNOU. Almost all of the study centers were furnished/equipped. Three-fourth study centre coordinators reported that academic counsellors for DNHE were available. Maximum of the study centre coordinator displayed counselling schedule of IGNOU academic counselling at least a week before the class. Many of the study center coordinators reported that they sent the feedback of checked assignments within 30 days. With regards to receipt of study material, 84% of the study centre coordinators reported that most of the students attached to their study center received course material on time. Also, all study center coordinators said that the study center was regularly monitored by the Regional Center. With regard to the support received from the Regional Center in terms of material, financial, administrative, training most of the study center coordinators reported complete support.

Feedback from IGNOU Functionaries

There were 64 Regional Centers where DNHE was implemented (year 2013 as per RSD data). Responses were received from all Regional Centers. They reported that there has been a constant increase in the student numbers. DNHE being an old programme of IGNOU there were not many problems except for the Project Work. In the interaction with Students Registration Division (SRD), It was explained that the normal process of admission for IGNOU programmes was followed for this programme too and the eligibility criteria for this programme was 10+2. Interaction with Student Evaluation Division (SED), informed that the SED did not face any specific problem pertaining to conduct of examination of this programme. In interaction with MPDD, it was explained that the normal process of material distribution and production were followed for DNHE as for other IGNOU programmes.

v) *To suggest recommendations for revision of the programme*

Observations and suggestions provided by the DNHE learners

The learners for this programme came from varied background such as sports personnel, doctors, yoga experts, home makers and others who later wanted to do community work in the area of health and nutrition. Many learners reported that the programme was excellent compiled. Statements like "Thank you IGNOU for such a useful course material" expressed their feelings. Some learners however reported that the study material in Hindi was difficult to comprehend and project work needs to be simplified. With regards to academic counseling, learners found the academic counselling to be interactive and helped to explain concepts. A few of the learners reported that the attitude of the counsellor towards learner is aggressive and not positive. Almost all the students reported that they were not aware of any library services at the Study Center. Some learners stated

that there was urgent need to revise the course material. At the time of undertaking the study, the programme revision was already initiated by the School and feedback received from the learners further assisted in programme revision. The revised programme has been launched.

Observations and suggestions provided by the academic counsellors

Most of the academic counsellors found DNHE course contents were satisfactory. They stated that the course material was self-explanatory, contents are very good and nicely compiled. Project work was also good. The programme was well planned but there is an urgent need to update/revise the programme. Revision in terms of the latest RDA values (ICMR 2010) to be added, more examples to be included, new diseases including diet therapy be added. Further recognizing the usefulness of the programme, it was emphasized that DNHE programme be promoted through Newspapers and Mass Media for increasing enrolment.

Observations and suggestions provided by the study centre coordinators

Most of the study center coordinators opined that IGNOU should do publicity in local T.V. channel to publicize the programme. As such programme was very important and popular and therefore should be given wide publicity. Some coordinators suggested to reduce the result declaration time and issue mark sheet as soon as possible. Most of the coordinators praised the faculty and IGNOU authorities for making a socially relevant programme. Some coordinators felt the need of conducting orientation/training programmes at regular intervals at Regional Centre.

Conclusion

The programme evaluation study of the DNHE programme found that the programme was very valuable to all the stakeholders. The DNHE offered by SOCE, IGNOU through distance education was a novel programme. The course materials were appreciated. It was felt that such courses for skill upgradation are important for continuing education of health and nutrition education.

Revision of course materials is important so as to keep the course content updated. Efforts should be made to have relevant books and journals in the study centers for DNHE learners. It is suggested that there should be avenues of meetings/interaction with the learners, of DNHE with the Programme Coordinator to enrich their experiences of learning and promoting effective delivery and implementation of the programme. Orientation programme for the academic counsellors and study center coordinators should be regularly organized so that the programme delivery can be further enhanced. With implementation of the recommendations

of the study, the programme content, delivery and other implementation aspects will be further improved. The future learners of this programme will have advantage of this revised and improved programme.

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Annexure 1

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<https://ignouproject.net/nutrition-and-health-education-project/>

Instances where selected sources appear: 2

Reviewers Memorandum



Internal Assessor Statement: The paper is very significant in nature as there was a felt need to conduct an evaluation study of Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education programme, so as to analyse the relevance of the curriculum and study the effectiveness of the course material which would lead to the revision of the programme.

External Critic (National): IGNOU is a university with a national as well as international presence. Whereas, the data collected for the study was restricted to the three Regional Centers of Delhi, National Capital Region (NCR). The study would have shown better results if a larger sample across PAN India was taken into consideration.

Outer Reviewer's (Global) observation: The study has used a mixed method approach of data collection which in a way improves the acceptability of the results. A good number of supporting studies are referred. Use of charts and tables improves the clarity of the results.



Amiteshwar Ratra and Deeksha kapur
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Conflict of Interest: Author of a Paper had no conflict neither financially nor academically.

Editorial Excerpt



The article has 01% of plagiarism which is the accepted percentage as per the norms and standards of the journal for the publication. As per the editorial board's observations and blind reviewers' remarks the paper had some minor revisions which were communicated on a timely basis to the authors (Amiteshwar and Deeksha) and accordingly all the corrections had been incorporated as and when directed and required to do so. The comments related to this manuscript are noticeably related to the theme "Evaluation Study of a Diploma Programme" both subject-wise and research-wise. The study aims to evaluate a diploma programme in nutrition and health education and demonstrates the appreciation of self-learning materials by various stakeholders. The results are based on the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data received. The finding of the study revealed that the programme evaluation was useful to all the stakeholders. Overall, the paper promises to provide a strong base for the further studies in the area. After comprehensive reviews and editorial board's remarks the manuscript has been categorised and decided to publish under "Case Based Study Paper" category.

Acknowledgement



The acknowledgement section is an essential part of all academic research papers. It provides appropriate recognition to all contributors for their hard work and effort taken while writing a paper. The data presented and analyzed in this paper by (Amiteshwar and Deeksha) were collected first handily and wherever it has been taken the proper acknowledgment and endorsement depicts. The author is highly indebted to others who had facilitated in accomplishing the research. Last but not least endorse all reviewers and editors of GJEIS in publishing in a present issue.

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